

Contributions

INDEPENDENT THINKING

C. H. WETHERBE

While independent thinking has its true limits, yet it is a privilege to which every Christian man and woman are entitled. The true Christian freeman will not allow his fellows, however thorough and wide-ranged their scholarship may be, to prescribe for him just what doctrines and propositions he must believe. He will not submit to any ecclesiastical popery, nor to any scholarly despotism.

Rev. Dr. D. J. Burrell, in the *Christian Intelligencer* says: "The proposition to leave fundamental questions (and of course the inerrancy of scripture is fundamental) to the ultimate determination of 'scholars' is averse to the historic genius of Protestantism. The people, as well as the ministry should resent it. Questions of spiritual importance are not to be settled in star chambers. No man can be asked to keep quiet while somebody else passes upon his faith. This might do in a church where 'ignorance is the mother of devotion,' but Protestantism says to every one: 'Think for yourself; let no man do your thinking for you.' To expect the people (to say nothing of their ministers, educated particularly in and for the exegesis of scripture) to stand aside with their hands on their lips, awaiting the judgment of a select body of 'experts' as to the truth of the oracles on which they build their eternal hope, this is a new conception of 'the glorious liberty of the children of God.' It is too late to set up a claim for such esoteric Christianity. There are no 'mysteries' in our religion for twice-born yogis to pass upon. Ours is the religion of light; its ultimate appeal is to the average man."

All of which is admirably true. Let us not sneeze when the expert theologians of the liberal school take snuff. The marvelous scholarship of such men as Professor Charles A. Briggs may be commended in the highest terms by some editors of religious papers, but this is no reason why common Christians should quit their own independency and eagerly swallow his deliverances.

BLESSINGS AWAITING

MRS. ORA TURNER

When I first glanced at this subject I could not help thinking of the many blessings we have received in the days past and gone.

My thoughts were taken back to the late National conference as one of these blessings.

I thought of those hillside prayer meetings and those sunrise praise meetings, for if ever our cup of joy is filled and if ever our hearts go out in praise and thanksgiving to God it is during one of these meetings. And it has pleased God to permit many of us to come together again to feast off the many good things he has in store for us in this our State Conference.

I only mention these blessings among the many as I believe we will have to admit that

we have received many great blessings from God, the giver of all good and perfect gifts.

But what assurance have we of future blessings? Blessings awaiting. We find in John 3:16, that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life.

The poet, also, has said,

"Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine,
Oh what a foretaste of glory divine."

We all sing this, do we not? And sometimes while singing it we almost imagine we get a glimpse of the Glory World. O what blessings come to us thru the spirit of song. Yes there are blessings awaiting us, but we are to receive these only on certain conditions. Some one says I do not believe this, for God will send the rain on the just and unjust. So he does send the rain of prosperity, for it seems that the unjust receive the rainfull to save their crops or are blessed some other way in temporal things when the just are not, but when God *fails* to favor the unjust this way, where are their hopes? They then find that they have laid up where "moth doth corrupt and thieves break thru and steal." While the just have been laying up treasures that are incorruptible and fade not away eternal and in the heavens.

This is what we are looking for, a blessing that will last.

We have the promise of being blessed for every good deed or act, even a cup of cold water given in his name shall in no wise lose its reward.

I believe this life is what we make it. If I have not been blessed in the past year it is *my* fault. If I am not fitting myself for future blessings, it is *my* fault. We have been placed in a land of liberty and Bibles, where we can worship God according to the dictates of our own conscience, and now if we do not accept the offered terms of mercy, *we* are to blame.

We have opportunities given us. We need not search or purchase an opportunity to do good in this life. What we want to do is to watch that at some unguarded moment we do not let them pass by unimproved.

If we would receive spiritual blessings we must commune often with the Father and always be ready and willing to do our duty. God has promised to be our staff and our stay, but we must lean upon this staff, we must trust in his promise, we must consecrate our lives to his service and then will come that comfort, that sweet peace. "My peace I give unto you. My peace I leave with you. Not as the world giveth, give I unto you, let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. In my father's house are many mansions, if it were not so I would have told, I go to prepare a place for you and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also."

Brothers and sisters let us prepare ourselves for that mansion beyond. Let us do whatsoever our hands find to do, that we may receive blessings in this life and also have

right to the tree of life and enter in thru the gate to the city which is the last and greatest blessing awaiting us.

GOD'S PROMISES NEVER FAIL

MRS. ELI HOOVER

Why are we such doubting Christians? We believe in God to a certain extent, yet we doubt sometimes if God is true. God will never fail to bring us safely thru if we only do our part. Some one says, "What is our part? We sometimes sing that lovely song:

"Many will these bright crowns be,
Is there none prepared for me?"

Now here comes in our part. We are soldiers enlisted under one great King, and it is a constant warfare. We are not to be drones in the hive, but constantly at work if we expect to wear a crown. There is one prepared for you, sister or brother, do not doubt. We often, to our sorrow, hear something like this, "I doubt if any one will be at prayer meeting, I believe I will stay at home." Oh, do not doubt but go. That is one place we can do our part. Let us have more hungering and thirsting after God's truths and we will not be absent from prayer meeting, Sunday-school or church services.

We have not come to the stopping place yet. There is so much to do in such a busy world, yes, busy, I say, but sometimes busy in the wrong way. Let us be busy working for eternity. We have no abiding city here. We seek one to come, then let us not grow weary in well doing, but press on towards that better place to which God has promised to those that love and obey him.

"Mansions are prepared above,
By the gracious God of love,
Many will those mansions see
Is there one prepared for me

Crowns that dazzle human eye
Wait for those who reach the sky.
Many will those bright crowns be,
Is there one prepared for me?"

THE CHRISTMAS GIFT

S. KIEHL.

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above. Jesus says, I came down from heaven to do the will of him that sent me. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life. The gift of God is eternal life thru Jesus Christ our Lord. God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life." Have you received Jesus the Son of God as your Lord and Savior? "As many as received Him to them gave he power to become the sons of God. Thanks be unto God for this unspeakable gift."

Commemorate this day by receiving this loving Savior, and to you "the whole earth will be full of his glory."

TRUE DEVOTION

ROSALIE HOLSINGER

True devotion is a subject which concerns and should be of vital interest to every true